CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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EXPEL ZIONIST BOSSES WITH INTERNATIONALIST WORKERS' POWER

Workers in Teaneck, NJ militantly protest Israeli and U.S. bosses displacement and genocide agenda. From Gaza to Jersey the only solution to genocide, displacement, and starvation is a class war for communism

TEANECK, NJ, March 10—Upwards of 500 angry workers and youth gathered outside of the Teaneck National Guard Armory on Sunday to protest the U.S. military's active support and local New Jersey Zionists participation in the genocide in Palestine. An Israeli real estate company, My Home in Israel, is one of many companies around the world where Zionists are clamoring to purchase lands where workers in Palestine have been violently displaced (NYT, 3/11). As mass starvation and famine sets in due to the imperialist genocide of workers in Palestine, workers around the world are intensifying their rage which manifested at the protest of this property showcase.

The U.S. bosses revealed again their role in the genocide by calling out local Teaneck police to insure that the showcase took place. About half a dozen members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) attended and hundreds of CHALLENGEs were distributed, as well as a letter of anti-racist solidarity connecting workers from Gaza to workers facing eviction and gentrification in New Jersey.PLP demonstrated once again that in spite of the limited, nationalist leadership of the anti-occupation movement, our class supports the internationalist vision of workers' power and that our ideas are indeed mass ideas.

Workers militantly confront Zionism—open to communist politics

While the Zionist counterprotesters were to be expected, what was not expected was the militant reaction from workers. A group of young and courageous workers confronted them during the rally in front of the Teaneck armory, setting a militant tone for the rest of the day. Meanwhile the bosses quickly showed that their lackey police were there only to serve and protect the racists and Zionists. When one lone Zionist showed up across the street from the rally at the armory, dozens of courageous youth crossed the street and encircled him with chants and flags.

As members of PLP, we met before the rally, developed our own strategy for security, and ensured that we were supportive but not spontaneously driven to a fight that our class was not prepared for. The anger and desperation that workers feel can only be resolved by waging internationalist class war against phony capitalist democracy and its inevitable path to inter-imperialist war and fascism.

Later on during the demonstration we drew on workers anger and militancy against another group of Zionist counter protesters by leading dozens in a chant calling them the Nazi fascists that they are. Many antiracist workers were invigorated at the identification of Zionism with the historical fact of fascism during World War II. Our goal was to offer a counter-narrative to the lie that anti-Zionism is anti-semitism,

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SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.
While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Appearance & essence of liberal fascists call for ceasefire

The latest response to the state terror in Gaza from Genocide Joe Biden and Top KKKop Kamala Harris is a classic case of appearance and essence (see box). Between Biden's announcement of "aid" drops and Harris' phony call for a ceasefire, the main wing of the U.S. ruling class wants it to appear that they care about the mass slaughter and starvation in Palestine. But the essence is that the liberal rulers are terrified of international fightback and of isolationist Donald Trump recapturing the White House.

Despite the desperate efforts of the capitalist media to mislead and confuse us, more and more workers are seeing the Democrats' true colors. In a period of nine days, hundreds of thousands of workers—including 19 percent of the total vote in Minnesota and 13 percent in Michigan and North Carolina—slapped Biden by voting "uncommitted" or "no preference" in the presidential primaries. Once-loyal liberal voters are disgusted and appalled by the Democrats' complicity in arming Israel and enabling the racist mass murder in Gaza. On the international stage, a declining U.S. has little influence over events in the Middle East, or even over Israel, increasing the risk of a wider war in the region.

Global fightback against genocide and starvation

The Zionists' brutal ethnic cleansing has captured the attention of the international working class. On March 2, more than one hundred cities around the world staged "Shut it Down for Palestine" protests (ENN, 3/2). Over the last five months, millions of workers have said no to genocide and imperialist war. Though the politics in this struggle are mostly nationalist and reformist, this multiracial movement, led mainly by youth and women, has inspired our class. The Progressive Labor Party can do more to root itself in the mass organizations driving this international fightback. Our political line—that the only solution to nationalist genocide is a communist revolution--has never been truer. But we still need to win masses of workers to see the need for a communist party as the only way out of this capitalist hell.

Famines don't happen overnight. Prior to the Israel invasion last October, malnutrition was essentially nonexistent in Gaza. Today, according to humanitarian organizations, it has the highest proportion of people living in food deprivation in the world (Guardian, 3/6). At the highest risk are children, who make up half of Gaza's population. Thanks to the Zionists' blockades, as World Food Programme Executive Director Cindy McCain noted, "People in Gaza risk dying of hunger just miles from trucks filled with food" (World Health Organization, 1/15). With more than half a million people in Gaza one step away from famine (U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), the 38,000 meals recently dropped by the U.S. are pathetically inadequate (AP News, 3/2).

After months of inaction and obscene indifference, it's no coincidence that Harris's call for a limited ceasefire or Biden's celebration of the airdrops occurred within days of the Democratic primary humiliations (Reuters, 3/7). Regardless of whether Biden or fellow criminal Trump win in November, electoral politics can never change the capitalist system. An end to exploitation, racism, sexism, and war will never be on the ballot. Only a mass revolutionary communist party has the potential to turn the guns around and transform imperialist war into communist revolution.

Understanding Apperance and Essence

Dialectical materialism is the Marxist theory that historical events result from the conflict of opposing social forces—from a series of contradictions and their solutions. "Appearance and essence" is one category of dialectical materialism. The essence is the truth of something at its core, something that's often hard to see it because it lies so deep within the thing. Appearance is what is readily visible about the thing. Because there is a tendency to avoid digging deep to discover a thing's essence, misleading appearances tend to become conventional wisdoms. For example, the U.S. Democratic Party leaders might appear to be more compassionate and pro-worker than the Republicans because they pretend to care about racism, poverty, and reproductive health. In essence, however, they are controlled by the billionaires of finance capital. These misleaders will resort to lies and deceit to try to gain workers' allegiance to their agenda for fascism and world war.

Ceasefire call driven by bosses' cynicism

In her hypocritical speech to a crowd commemorating the famous antiracist civil rights fightback in Selma, Alabama, Harris called for an "immediate ceasefire" five months into the U.S.-funded slaughter of workers in Palestine. The Democratic Party is hemorrhaging Black, Latin, and Muslim workers from their ranks. These are the same workers that the liberal finance capitalist bosses need to recruit into their inevitable wars with Iran, Russia, and China over Middle Eastern trade routes and control over the region's oil. Harris' speech was nothing more than a cynical attempt to win these workers back into the Democrats' fold.

From the loss of Iran in 1979 to the U.S. military debacles in Iraq and Syria to weakened relations with petroleum kingpin Saudi Arabia, the U.S. has little clout left in the region. As its imperialist rivals keep making political and economic inroads, the U.S. ruling class is forced to stand by Israel, even if doing so risks a wider war the U.S. isn't ready to wage. At the same time, the U.S. bosses have little leverage over hardline Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Though Harris made a show of meeting with Benny Gantz, Netanyahu's main political rival, the fact is that both Gantz and Netanyahu are on the Israeli War Cabinet. Both have signed off on the genocide of workers and children in Palestine. If the U.S. still wielded the global power it had fifty years ago, Biden wouldn't have to resort to building a temporary port off the Mediterranean to bypass Israeli blockades of aid into Gaza (Associated Press, 3/7) And Netanyahu wouldn't be pursuing an invasion of Rafah in violation of Biden's toothless "red line" (Politico 3/10)

The only solution is communist revolution

While most workers aren't falling for the Democrats' charade, they are a long way from committing to the fight for a communist revolution. While the essence of the main wing's agenda is visible to many, the working class still struggles to see the potential of our class to run the world and serve workers' needs. But while the revolutionary beacons in Russia and China have been lost in the dark night of the current period, Progressive Labor Party's flame is small but bright! For our class sisters and brothers to be moved to join us, we must expand our potential by working in mass organizations and raising antiwar struggles everywhere we are. There is no day like today to fight back against imperialist war and end these capitalist horrors for good. Join us!

Teachers Fight against genocide and confront zionists at union meeting

Calling for a ceasefire is not enough! From Gaza to Maryland, our children deserve a communist world— where they can survive and thrive.

WASHINGTON, DC, March 6—Today a bold elementary school teacher fought to present a ceasefire resolution to stop genocide in Gaza at his union meeting (the Montgomery County Education Association). Over 200 teachers – many more than usual – attended this meeting in response to the controversy over the runup to this resolution. This struggle demonstrated that fighting Israeli fascism and its U.S. ruling class backers must be on everyone's agenda. The communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) brought revolutionary analysis to this activity, arguing that only armed struggle for communist revolution will ultimately defeat fascism.

Antiracists versus zionists

The teacher had submitted a request to present the NBI (new business item) containing the resolution for ceasefire back in January. After months of setbacks and redirections from union leaders, the resolution was finally cleared for presentation and ensuing debate at the March representative assembly meeting for the MCEA. The teacher worked with the union vice president who would chair the meeting to determine the best way to present the resolution. But the Jewish Community Relations Council of Washington DC (JCRC), a local pro-genocide zionist organization, got wind of this upcoming resolution from pro-Israel teachers, some of whom threatened to quit the union if the resolution was even brought up for debate!

The JCRC had already succeeded in pressing the Montgomery County school administration to place several teachers on administrative leave based on spurious antisemitism charges (CHALLENGE, 1/17 & 2/28).

The zionists set their sights on intimidating the union leaders into ruling that consideration of the resolution "out of order". They issued a leaflet filled with distortions and lies and called for a pro-Israel rally outside the union meeting. The vice president gave in to the pressure and declared the resolution "out of order" and moved on to another agenda item. One angry teacher leaped from her seat objecting to that decision and was threatened with being removed from the meeting! Other teachers walked out of the meeting in disgust at their leaders. The lame excuse the vice president and the union lawyer gave for caving to zionist pressure was a bylaw in the Union's rulebook that says the MCEA is a local entity and doesn't have authority to speak on anything outside of the "local nexus".

Antiracists keep fighting!

But the anti-genocide teacher was not done! During the "open mic" portion of the agenda, he declared that the bylaw and the vice president's decision was what was "out of order" and gave a strong principled speech about the need for the union to come down on the side of oppressed workers everywhere, especially where ongoing genocide was occurring. "We are antiracist teachers and if we are trying to fight racism we must fight it everywhere we see it—not just our town, county, state or country—we must be international and unite—Jewish, Arab, Black, White and Latin must unite and be one to fight racism!" He read the entire "out of order" ceasefire resolution to many appreciative teachers. Other teachers then stepped to the mic in solidarity. Since the meeting, other teachers have sent emails of support to the resolution's author, so the future is bright.

Meanwhile, outside the meeting, PLP members and other anti-genocide organizers rallied in support of the teacher, chanting "Stop Killing Babies" and "Workers of the World Unite" while the JCRC members, defended by 11 armed police, pitifully chanted "School Solutions, Not War Resolutions". PLP members distributed CHALLENGEs and PLP flyers and made contacts with new organizers, ensuring that more revolutionary consciousness will be raised in the days to come. But an ominous fact was that the Zionists slightly outnumbered the anti-genocide organizers. We must increase our base building and mobilization among our friends and co-workers to ensure that we control the streets when fascists threaten.

Educator wins back job

A fighting lesson for defeating liberal fascism in the classroom

NEW YORK CITY, March 11—After 100 days of being administratively reassigned for pro-Palestine advocacy, an educator was victoriously returned to the classroom. Accused of pushing a political agenda, this educator was abruptly taken from and finally put back into the classroom thanks to a powerful school community fight back.

The liberal ruling class supporters of Israeli fascists openly demonstrated their hypocrisy and repression proclaiming political neutrality while attacking opposition to their genocidal war in Gaza. This double standard was obvious for the whole school to see. Every educator knows that what and how they teach in a classroom is a political act—a Zionist or a capitalist would surely not face any criticism.

The "apolitical" education stance of the liberal fascist rulers weaves ideological illusions of inclusion and pluralism to maintain domestic support for their horrific slaughter of our class brothers and sisters abroad. As capitalism goes through increasing crises, it is necessary more than ever to see through and struggle against liberalism in all forms.

Fighting back in a Dark Night

Through this educational struggle, there were valuable lessons to be learned about organizing under increasing fascism. In this Dark Night of political organizing and fightback, there are often very low levels of class consciousness. This includes even sellout unions like the main caucus of the United Federation of Teachers. They prefer under-the-table deals with bosses as well as secrecy and isolation for union members.

Against fears of reprisals from the bosses, workers must bring things to light and defend one another. The working class is weaker when we are not joined together in a multiracial struggle. The bosses count on fragmentation and fear to silence those of us under attack. Though the union attempted this silencing strategy, it was the work of organizing parents, students, and teachers that ultimately brought the educator back to the school.

Our strategy ultimately paid off with parents agitating against the administration, students gathering their peers, and teachers pressuring the union to take a class-struggle stance. To fend off ruling class attacks, it is necessary to continuously base build with those who will collectively work to defend one another. To do so makes it possible to force the ruling class to pay a price for their actions while raising consciousness in struggle. Above all, the knowledge that there is collectivity can empower those who otherwise might feel defeated, exhausted, scared, or isolated.

This victory is to be celebrated. However, winning this reform is not nearly enough. Without a revolutionary party to fight for a communist horizon, it is too easy to forget the lessons of struggle in this Dark Night. One such lesson from the past that should not be forgotten is the Nazi policy of Gleichschaltung, which saw nearly all German teachers enlisting in the project of fascism.

These fascist and nationalist ideas in education continue today as many teachers in the U.S. remain complicit in the schools bombed and students killed in Gaza today. As capitalism continues to deteriorate, teachers will undoubtedly be on the front lines of enforcing violence against migrants, unhoused people, and those caught in the middle of an inter-imperialist war. Against these threats, together with the Progressive Labor Party, we will continue to fight back!

From NYC to Palestine

Learning to fight, fighting to learn amid genocide & rising fascism

NEW YORK CITY, March 9— This past weekend, members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party participated in mass action and led a study group related to the ongoing genocide against Palestinian workers being carried out by the Zionist bosses of Israel and their imperialist lackeys in the U.S. and Europe.

IDF, NYPD—from Rafah to NYC, HANDS OFF

With 1.5 million Palestinians currently living on top of each other in tents across its city streets, Rafah is currently the most densely populated place in the world, and vulnerable to ground assault. The mass action in Washington Square Park was called in response to these sharpening conditions in Gaza. Despite heavy rain, upwards of 1,200 workers filled the square with militant energy.

Approximately two dozen members and friends attended, distributing close to 900 copies of CHALLENGE, and leading sharp multilingual chants calling for the end of capitalism by way of communist revolution. The surrounding crowd echoed "Fight for communism, now's the time!" signaling a shift in class consciousness by the working class here.

Ramping up of fascism

This mass demonstration of internationalist unity inspires confidence and hope at a time when both are much needed. From Rafah to NYC, workers around the world are feeling the boot heel of fascism crushing their necks against the curb. This action comes amid the Biden administration's performative charity of dropping aid boxes with malfunctioning parachutes, resulting in the death of civilians, rather than simply allowing aid trucks to pass through the border.

Meanwhile, in NYC, workers suffer inflated food prices, and cuts to social programs, with liberal fascist-in-training Governor Kathy Hochul adding 1000 National Guard soldiers to patrol subways at a time when crime is down. The message—that workers can and should only expect evermore brutish conditions—is clear, and workers are beginning to see the writing on the wall.

Nationalism vs. internationalism

Following the action, we held a study-action group that is part of a series that a club of educators has been conducting for the last year. We discussed the limits of nationalism and teased out lively discussions of our position on intersectionality, which seems to be the greatest source of disagreement. Of our 25 participants that day, some we had just met at the action.

We look forward to our next meeting and all in all, it was a reminder that what we do counts.

Fight for communism, now's the time!

Both the mass action and study group signal an optimistic, qualitative shift, but we must remain prepared, given that such a shift is not necessarily coupled by sharpened contradictions. We must maintain revolutionary optimism and sharpen our understanding of our line. As such, we must treat all base-building opportunities as valuable chances to objectively interrogate our line. With the rise of World War III on the horizon, we cannot shy away from sharp objectivity.

Build the Progressive Labor Party! Fight for communism!

Bosses' $ick war plans infect healthcare

NEW YORK CITY, March 10—The fight against the closing of Downstate Medical Center heated up this week as hundreds of workers, patients, and community members rallied, closing down Clarkson Avenue that runs in front of the hospital. Members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) joined the rally and distributed all the CHALLENGEs we had. We emphasized the racist nature of attacking healthcare in this largely Black neighborhood that has triple maternal mortality and double infant mortality than that of white workers.

You can't turn on the news without seeing horrific pictures of death and dying. Thirty thousand are dead in Gaza under ruthless attack from Israeli forces, in the latest of the decades-long wars over Middle Eastern oil. Millions are dead in ongoing wars in the Congo over mineral riches, with each of the big powers arming one side or the other. Now New York State (NYS) wants to cut the guts out of healthcare in central Brooklyn by closing Downstate Hospital. Often it is women and children who bear the brunt in both wars and cutbacks.

These Brooklyn attacks on the working class are connected to world events. Downstate, a safety net hospital, has been shortchanged for years in NYS budgeting. The politicians cry that too much is being spent on healthcare. All this is against a backdrop of $3.8 billion per year going to arm Israel, plus a Biden proposal of $14 billion additional to help in the current war against Palestinians. The U.S. has given Ukraine $46 billion in military aid, but only $1.6 billion in humanitarian aid. Last year, the U.S. gave only $3 billion to the World Food Program. No penny-pinching when it comes to arms, but plenty when it comes to the care of working people.

But women are not just helpless victims (See IWWD article on page 8). Women in Gaza and Congo are fighting to feed and shelter their families. It was largely women workers at Downstate who spearheaded the fight 11 years ago to keep it open, and they will lead again this time as we fight for our patients and our jobs. Women, (and children grown), will fight alongside men from Gaza and Israel, to Congo, to Ukraine and Russia, to Brooklyn to turn the guns around on the callous leaders who are killing us to feed the imperialist profit machine that needs world domination.

Expel zionist bosses with internationalist workers' power

Continued from page 1

and workers appreciated that. The imperialist strategy for the past 75 years has entailed naked support for Zionist Israel as an anchor site for their profiteering domination in the oil-rich Middle East, and the latest attacks is a exposes U.S. bosses' imperialist dogfights from Yemen to Iran. Thousands of New Jersey National Guard soldiers were deployed to unknown parts of the Middle East in the past few weeks (News 12 NJ, 1/16).

The so-called "aid" efforts of the U.S., such as a proposal for a temporary port on the Gaza coast, will more than likely become launching pads for future U.S. operations. The leaders of the protest avoided these larger geopolitical concerns and simply declared that one ethno-nationalist Palestinian state was the solution.

We were there to fill in the gaps and offer a counter-analysis and solution through our bullhorns, papers and one-on-one conversations. We led dozens in a chant screaming "Arab, Jewish, Black and white, same enemy, same fight, workers of the world unite!" And as we left, many of the protesters thanked us for our contribution to the internationalist militancy of the event.

Communist internationalism smashing racist borders

The highlight was perhaps when we got dozens of protesters at the rally to take letters of support for a Morristown-based PLP comrade who stands to face eviction after denouncing the brutal, racist housing authority in their remodeling scheme of her complex. Utilizing PLP's slogan that "U.S. Israel Hand in Hand, Racist Displacement is the Bosses Plan," we spread this message at the rally while actively encouraging protesters to send their letters to the Morristown courts in defense of our comrade. While PLP could have done more to disrupt the rally in front of the armory, we maintained our politics and made efforts to bring our line to the fore any chance we got. Many were left with these words to ponder on, written by a Morristown PL'er:

It Happens Here and There"

Waiting on a response from the powers that Be
To be the powers that see or not to see
What capitalism is doing to our communities
Still waiting and contemplating on the next
Chess move that maybe the best move
To take down the upside down frown of the
The people who take the beating with a smile
Still being whipped in such a clever way
Because today the scars are not visible
They use the Willy Lynch tool to break
Down the mental in hopes that we never
See or understand that the power is in
Our hands if we take a stand and fight together! .

Black & Red 2024

No war but class war!

CHICAGO, February 24 –"This was really good! I learned so much that I didn't know." This was just one of our guests' responses this evening as a multiracial and multigenerational group of over 50 Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends came together for our annual Black and Red Celebration. We united to break bread and commemorate the history of the leadership and countless contributions that Black communists have made to the international working-class movement over the past 100 years.

The main theme of our event this year was "No War but Class War." In an often unpredictable and dangerous world, where different capitalist forces want us to take up arms to shoot and kill our working-class siblings, we say that the only fight worth having is the one that builds a communist revolution, overthrowing these bosses and their racist, sexist system!

Black communists lead anti-fascist fightback

There were four presentations that participants rotated to and discussed important questions. One presentation was about the role of Black soldiers during the U.S. imperialist slaughter of Vietnam in opposing the war and fighting racism that was rampant in the U.S. military. Their multiracial unity and militancy with other soldiers—even to the point where they killed their bloodthirsty officers—ultimately helped bring the war to an end.

Another was the role of the Black communists from the United States who went to Spain in the late 1930s to organize and fight against General Francisco Franco and his fascist ruling class forces there. They went there as part of the International Brigades, integrated military units organized by the communist-led Soviet Union that crossed into Spain at great risk to fight the fascists. Other so-called "democracies" including in Europe and the United States took a neutral position during the Spanish Civil War or even gave material support to Franco's side.

Honoring the loss of Black Reds in PLP

The final two presentations honored two recently deceased comrades from the area, Lorrell Kilpatrick of Northwest Indiana (see CHALLENGE, 1/31) and Finley Campbell of Chicago (see CHALLENGE, 9/20/23). They both were committed antiracist comrades who did not hold back on the line of the Party or in serving the working class. Findley was honored with an illustrated story about his involvement in the PLP Summer Project in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1979.

The conversations and connections made at this event gave concrete narratives of Black workers being key to the communist revolution. Black workers' experience, leadership, and resistance to the deadly racist profit system are crucial to getting the whole working class out of this miserable capitalist chaos.

Lastly, the main speech given by a veteran comrade emphasized the theme of "No War but Class War":

> *As the worldwide crisis of capitalism intensifies, the imperialist bosses of the U.S., Russia, and China are sharpening their competition over the world's labor and resources.*
>
> *Inter-imperialist rivalry is at an all-time high, fascism and nationalist movements are gaining steam and worker-on-worker anger and violence are simmering. So as revolutionary communists, it is our task to win our class away from ideologies that cause them to fight each other, and not see the bosses as a true enemy. We have to win them towards the revolutionary movement for workers' state power.*
>
> *No war but class war sums that up whether it be the conflict in Ukraine. No war but class war. The genocide in Gaza. No war but class war. Ethiopia, no war but class war. Guyana and Venezuela, No war but class war. Liberal fascists versus pro-Trump fascists, no war but class war. Black workers being pitted against migrant workers -- no war but class war. Or even gang violence in Chicago, which is impacting and terrorizing the youth and our communities—No war but class war. There is a major political education campaign that we must wage so that workers are prepared to fight back against and ultimately smash fascism.*

Overall, this year's Black and Red helped us unite political education with personal connections in a beautiful way. We raised over $400, and several friends signed up to be in a PLP study group. Connecting our understanding of past movements to the class struggle of the present day will help us continue to build a stronger international, multiracial movement for communism.

Students protest israel occupation forces

Hundreds of students protested the liberal fascist ed bosses' welcoming of genocide occupation forces on campus.

NEW PALTZ, February 28—Signs saying "No War Criminals on Campus" and "Jews Against Genocide" were among the sea of placards carried by hundreds of protestors at SUNY New Paltz today. The demonstrators, who included SUNY students and community members, were protesting the presence of Israeli soldiers, members of the IDF (Israeli Defense Force), who were brought to campus by the New Paltz Jewish Student Union in collaboration with Students Supporting Israel, a well-funded Zionist organization with chapters on dozens of university campuses. A spokesperson for the Jewish Student Union said, "I thought it would be beneficial to the community to humanize these [IDF] people..." The response showed that polishing up the image of soldiers who are carrying out mass slaughter of women and children is not so easy.

Plans for a demonstration sprang up shortly after the IDF speakers were announced and within days 300 - 400 angry protestors were chanting loudly in the pouring rain. Pro-Palestinian organizations in the area, including Students for Justice in Palestine, New Paltz Women in Black, Jewish Voice for Peace, and others collaborated to get the word out. The energy was high. The political thrust of the protest was humanitarian, including reading the names of hundreds of Palestinian children killed in recent weeks. Still, the complicity of politicians and the university administration in the ongoing genocide was reflected in many chants.

The rapid and spirited outpouring of political anger we are seeing, even in places that you won't read about in the bosses' media, shows that the lid is blowing off. There are so many people looking for answers today, especially young people, that organizers have our work cut out for us! Progressive Labor Party (PLP) comrades here in the Hudson Valley are becoming active in local mass organizations where communist politics can be injected into the protests against the brutality of imperialist slaughter.

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Cuba: international solidarity with working class in Gaza

Thousands of people gathered as part of World Day in solidarity with the Palestinian people, so that another genocide is not committed, this time in the city of Rafah. The event in Havana, Cuba, where I am spending a few days with my family, was an anti-imperialist tribune, in front of the embassy of the U.S. government, attended especially by young people. During the protest event, young representatives from different sectors of the country spoke, including workers' unions and several young Palestinians studying at the international medical school. Their broken voices narrated all the pain and suffering of their people who have been carrying on for more than 75 years fighting against Zionism and Israeli apartheid in the occupied territories. Their families have had to unite and leave everything behind.

All voices agreed in a unanimous condemnation of the Zionist government of Israel for the genocide committed against the heroic Palestinian people. This occasion has cost, in a few months of bombing, the lives of more than 30,000 innocent civilians, including more than 19,000 lives of children.

Transit workers say bosses' attacks mean fight back!

After the recent attack on New York City Transit Conductor Alton Scott, city transit workers took a brave stand against the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) bosses. They filled out safety forms and refused to operate their trains, causing mass service disruptions on several subway lines for a day! Workers were and are fed up with the bosses' failed solutions to protect them and for a moment in time realized that withholding their labor is part of the solution! The action has the bosses in full attack mode, with Governor Kathy Hochul announcing plans for 1,000 members of the state police and National Guard to patrol the subway in response. When capitalism is in crisis the ruling class has no real answer to the racist unemployment, lack of housing, mental health, and drug addiction ailments their system creates. Instead they are ratcheting up their attacks on workers, specifically Black and Latin workers. These actions don't serve to keep riders safe but instead foster an environment of fear and unwillingness to fight back.

Capitalist media tells us day in and day out that the only way to solve these anti-social behaviors in the working class comes through their fascist Klansmen in Blue, complemented by their cousins in the fascist military. This is the same National Guard that has no qualms about taking in proud card-carrying Neo-Nazis in their ranks! While he forces cuts on the city's critical social services, liberal Mayor Eric Adams funds the New York Police Department to the tune of $11 billion, the largest police budget in the country. It's the same cycle: after another of these attacks, more cops flood the trains, yet the attacks continue. Now military forces stand armed with rifles outside Grand Central as a show of the ruling class's power, while impoverished families struggle to pay their rent and put food on the table.

Meanwhile, racist Adams blames these cuts on migrant workers escaping U.S. imperialism's clutches, despite his city council projecting the city to take in an additional $1 billion more than expected for the fiscal year! MTA workers and riders have nothing to gain when looking to these stooges for protection.

The Progressive Labor Party knows only the working class can put a permanent end to worker-on-worker assaults. Join us in the fight for not just a safer subway system, but a world where workers can be safe once and for all: a communist world.

Black and Red, untold history part III:

MLK's class contradictions

Continued from page 8

> *gues, who shaped its political choices as much as … the Communist International* (NYT, 6/6/15).

Like the Scottsboro campaign 20 years earlier the Montgomery Bus Boycott, initiated when Rosa Parks refused to move to the Black section of a Montgomery, Alabama bus, drew world-wide attention to the fight against racism in the segregated South. The fight for civil rights became a major embarrassment to the U.S. ruling-class. At the time, China, the world's largest country was communist-led, as was the Soviet Union. These two worker super powers provided leadership and support to anti-imperialist movements across Africa, Asia, and South America.

U.S. rulers forced to support Civil Rights Movement

The U.S tried to counter the growing communist-led movements by championing capitalist democracy, but at every turn the racist conditions forced on Black workers in the United States and the increasing demonstrations against those conditions undercut the U.S. bosses' attempts to gain support.

Under increasing pressure, the U.S. bosses were forced into tacitly supporting the growing civil rights movement. At the same time, they were terrified of the movement that brought together hundreds of thousands of Black and white workers and students in the fight against segregation. The U.S. ruling-class, between a rock and a hard place, tried to gain control of the movement by both working with and threatening Martin Luther King.

John F. Kennedy and later Lyndon B. Johnson worked with Martin Luther King to end official Jim Crow. The bosses' legal arm led by Attorney General Robert Kennedy and FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover, spied on and tried to disrupt and control the movement by building anti-communism. The bosses' goal was to limit the movement to blaming the smaller Southern bosses for all of the racism in the country and ignore the racist conditions in the North.

Liberal misleaders attack antiracists and communists

The ruling-class went after every leader and institution connected to the civil rights movement to try to keep it under control. Martin Luther King as the leading figure of the movement came under particular attack and pressure.

> *In 1963 King bowed to the wishes of the Kennedy Administration and fired SCLC employee Jack O'Dell after the FBI alleged that he was a communist. King also agreed to cease direct communication with his friend and closest white advisor, Stanley Levison, although he eventually resumed contact with him in March 1965. FBI surveillance and bugs tracked King's political associations and produced evidence of King's extramarital sexual activities—information that was later leaked to some reporters.*
>
> *In 1965 King faced questions from journalists on Meet the Press about his association with Tennessee's Highlander Folk School, which had been branded a "Communist training school" on billboards that appeared throughout Alabama during the Selma to Montgomery March and showed King attending a Highlander workshop. (Stanford University King Encyclopedia)*

Communist leadership was instrumental in Civil Rights movement

King was a contradictory figure. He publicly professed anti-communism, yet he was undoubtedly influenced by the communist movement and recognized that communism reflected the desires of an exploited working-class oppressed by racism.

> *Indeed, it may be that communism is a necessary corrective for a Christianity that has been all too passive and a democracy that has been all too inert. Communism should challenge us to be more concerned about social justice. However much is wrong with communism, we must admit that it arose as a protest against the hardships of the underprivileged. The Communist Manifesto, which was published in 1847 by Marx and Engels, emphasizes throughout how the middle-class has exploited the lower-class. Communism in society is a classless society. Along with this goes a strong attempt to eliminate racial prejudice. Communism seeks to transcend the superficialities of race and color, and you are able to join the Communist Party whatever the color of your skin or the quality of your blood." (MLK speech "Can a Christian be a Communist")*

At the end of the famed march from Selma to Montgomery, King gave perhaps his clearest speech on the roots of racism as a tool used by the bosses to divide the working-class:

> *Racial segregation as a way of life did not come about as a natural result of hatred between the races immediately after the Civil War. There were no laws segregating the races then…the segregation of the races was really a political stratagem…to keep the southern masses divided and southern labor the cheapest in the land. You see, it was a simple thing to keep the poor white masses working for near-starvation wages in the years that followed the Civil War. Why, if the poor white plantation or mill worker became dissatisfied with his low wages, the plantation or mill owner would merely threaten to fire him and hire former Negro slaves and pay him even less. Thus, the southern wage level was kept almost unbearably low.*

Later King began to expand his public activity to address the war in Vietnam and attempted to extoll the U.S. to end the war on communism.

> *[I]n the summer of 1965 the press reported King's off-the-cuff remarks to a Southern Christian Leadership Conference rally in Virginia: "We're not going to defeat Communism with bombs and guns and gases.… We must work this out in the framework of our democracy" ("Dr. King Declares").*

In his 1967 book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* King decried

> *America's "morbid fear of communism," arguing that it prevented people from embracing a "revolutionary spirit and … declaring eternal opposition to poverty, racism, and militarism." (Stanford University King Encyclopedia)*

Ruling class violence met with antiracist workers' rebellion

While there are so many unanswered questions about the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968, like the killing of Malcolm X, it coincided with an expansion in King's political focus from civil rights for Black workers in the United States to fighting for economic rights for the working class and opposing imperialism. King was killed in Memphis where he was actively supporting striking Black sanitation workers.

As the ruling-class pressured King and ultimately murdered him, the working-class became increasingly politicized. Rebellions of Black workers rocked Newark, Watts, Harlem and Detroit and U.S Soldiers were rebelling against the war in Vietnam. In spite of the bosses' attempts to smother the movement, the working-class was rising up. The bosses may have hoped that killing King would stop the movement but instead the attack hardened the resolve of the working-class, particularly Black workers, to continue to fight.

IWWD 2024

working women leadership vital to communist revolution

All the many brands of suppression – racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, classism – are historical; they have not always been with us. It was not ever thus. And it's not going to be this way, come the revolution.

— Clara Zetkin

March 8 marked the 115th International Working Women's Day since its initial celebration by NYC garments workers in 1909. The date was chosen in recognition of a rebellion by women workers that began the overthrow of both feudalism and capitalism in Russia during the victorious October Revolution of 1917. In 2024 working women around the world remain leaders of class struggle, defying the bosses' sexist divisions as well as all other divisions meant to divide what would be an undefeatable, united working class.

From Palestine to Sudan working class women are serving as leaders in meeting the needs of their communities. From New York to Haiti, working women are leading struggles against the bosses to ignite the revolutionary consciousness of their fellow workers.

In February Dr. Amira Al-Assouli, a physician working in occupied Palestine, displayed both indomitable courage and collectivism by running through Israeli gunfire to rescue an individual at the entrance of the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Yunis. [Palestine Chronicle 2/11). When interviewed later about the incident, with the incident widely circulating on social media, Al-Assouli said "If I feel someone needs me, I will never think about my life." Her words and her actions prove how women and all working-class people's values stand in stark contrast to the individualism championed by the capitalist system that is funding and profiting from Israel's genocidal occupation of Gaza.

Al-Assouli, herself a displaced refugee, had her home destroyed in an Israeli bombing, is far from the only worker volunteering to help other working class people being killed and maimed in Gaza. Many other workers in Gaza and around the world are putting their lives on the line to help their fellow workers during one of capitalism's countless attacks on workers, serving nothing but the pockets of bosses, worldwide.

In Sudan, women workers are responding to Sudan's own civil war, working to provide shelter, food, medical and healthcare supplies, as well as psychological support to workers displaced and in need of aid (UN Women July, 2023). Women also play crucial journalistic roles in conflicts worldwide, providing the working class with vital information about attacks on the working class.

Women workers in leadership

The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism along with its special oppression against women that hurts all workers. Sexism forces women to prioritize reproductive labor, such as cooking, cleaning, and care work, promotes sexist culture that cheapens, degrades, and helps enable the exploitation and abuse of women as sexual objects. Capitalist-bred sexism pits men and women against each other, driving the global epidemic of femicide, in other words the murder of women and girls.

From NJ to Colombia, women in PLP are pushing to make the outcry against the Israeli State's genocidal occupation of Gaza a fight against the system which created the occupation, capitalism. Women comrades have worked to attain positions of trust and respect in mass organizations, led chants, and sold CHALLENGE to workers. This is in marked contrast to reformist leaders and politicians making meaningless, toothless calls for ceasefires that not only fail to help women under attack by capitalist, imperialist attacks but in fact provide ideological cover for them.

Where workers worldwide are looking for leadership, women communist leaders are meeting that need! Join them in the fight for a communist future without sexism! Join PLP!

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Yes, Haitian President Aristide was deposed by CIA

The Grayzone, 3/1—A spectacular jailbreak in Gonaïves, Haiti in August 2002 saw a bulldozer smash through the local prison walls, allowing armed supporters of Amiot "Cubain" Métayer, a gang leader jailed weeks earlier for harassing Haitian political figures, to overrun the facility. Métayer escaped, as did 158 other prisoners. Among them were perpetrators of the April 1994 Raboteau massacre, which left dozens of Haitians dead and displaced. The victims were supporters of popular anti-imperial President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Documents released… reveal that the jailbreak was part of a complex US intelligence operation, aimed at undermining Aristide's presidency. At the heart of this operation was Janice L. Elmore, a CIA operative working undercover as a Department of State "Political Officer" in the Port-au-Prince US Embassy at the time.

The breakout set in motion a violent regime change campaign, which ultimately ousted Aristide from office on February 29, 2004. After being deposed and flown to South Africa, Aristide claimed to have been "kidnapped" by US forces and directly accused Washington of orchestrating the plot.

French capitalists benefit from war In Ukraine

France24, 3/11–Ukraine has become the world's fourth-largest arms importer, while France has replaced Russia as the world's second-largest exporter behind the United States. Arms imports to Europe rose by 94 percent in 2019-2023, compared to the preceding five-year period, while overall global arms transfers decreased slightly, according to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)…The increase is "partially explained by the war in Ukraine, and Ukraine has become the fourth largest importer of arms in the world in the last five years"…in the 2019-2023 period, 55 percent of imports to Europe were from the US, up from 35 percent in the 2014-2018 period…While Russia's exports declined, France saw its own grow by 47 percent, thereby narrowly edging out Russia to become the world's second-largest exporter.

Being "anticapitalist" may lead to FBI investigation

The Intercept, 3/7–Aaron Bushnell's death by self-immolation in front of the Israeli Embassy in Washington last month has provoked nationwide soul-searching about the war in Gaza. For the U.S. government though, the airman's death excites a different kind of search: for so-called extremists, particularly left-wing ones. Last Wednesday, Sen. Tom Cotton…sent a letter to Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin asking why and how the Pentagon could tolerate an airman like Bushnell in its ranks. Calling his death "an act of horrific violence" that was "in support of a terrorist group [Hamas]"…Bushnell's posts on Reddit and other social media platforms before his death reflected this embrace of anarchism…the FBI maintains a program specifically for combating anarchists, called the Anarchist Extremism Program…An internal FBI threat advisory obtained by The Intercept defines Anarchist Violent Extremists as individuals "who consider capitalism and centralized government to be unnecessary and oppressive," and "oppose economic globalization; political, economic, and social hierarchies based on class, religion, race, gender, or private ownership of capital; and external forms of authority represented by centralized government, the military, and law enforcement."

Military bloc forming in challenge to U.S.-dominated NATO

Barron's, 3/11–The navies of China, Russia, and Iran are staging joint drills in the Gulf of Oman this week, Beijing said Monday. The military activities -- to be conducted from Monday through Friday -- are aimed at "jointly maintaining regional maritime security", according to a statement published on the social media platform WeChat by China's defense ministry. "China will send… guided-missile destroyer Urumqi, guided-missile frigate Linyi, and comprehensive supply ship Dongpinghu to participate in the exercise," the statement added, without providing further details…This year's round of joint exercises coincides with soaring tensions in the region as the war in Gaza rages and Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen have launched a flurry of attacks on ships in the Red Sea. Russian state media reported that a detachment of ships from the country's Pacific Fleet, led by the Varyag cruiser, arrived at the Iranian port of Chah Bahar on Monday ahead of the drills.

BLACK AND RED, UNTOLD HISTORY PART III

MLK'S CLASS CONTRADICTIONS

Ruling-class historians have segregated the fight against racism and the fight for an egalitarian system, communism. In reality, the two were connected like flesh and bone. Many antiracist struggles were led by, initiated by, or were fought with communists and communist-influenced organizations. Many Black fighters were also dedicated communists and pro-communists of their time.

In turn, the bosses have used anti-communism as a tool to terrorize and divide antiracist fightback. Regardless of communist affiliation, anyone who fought racism was at risk of being redbaited. Why? 1) The ruling class understands the natural relationship between antiracism and communism, and 2) Multiracial unity threatens the very racist system the bosses "work so hard" to maintain.

This series aims to reunite the history of communism with antiracism. Part I explored how the fight to free Scottsboro Boys was ignited by the International Labor Defense of the Communist Party. See Robin D.G. Kelley's book Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression to find out more.

Part II explored how the international communist movement was the impetus of the civil rights movement. It excerpts from the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in the essay, "The Civil Rights Movement" by researcher Davarian L. Baldwin at Trinity College.

The communist movement both helped inspire and was shaped by the antiracist struggle for civil rights in the U.S. Martin Luther King Jr. and many of the leading civil rights figures were influenced by the Communist Party (CP). Rosa Parks had attended Communist Party meetings and been trained as an organizer at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee which had been supported by members and friends of the CP. Bayard Rustin, Stanley Levinson and Jack O'Dell, who all played important roles in King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, that grew out of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, were active at various times in the communist movement.

Communist leadership in the Jim Crow south

Just as important was the 25-year history of the Communist Party in Alabama led by Black workers leading many struggles against racism and building several organizations including the International Labor Defense, the Sharecroppers Union, the International Workers Order, the League of Young Southerners, and the Southern Negro Youth Congress that in total involved around 20,000 mainly Black workers. These organizations were at their peak in the 1930's, but the experience of fighting against racism and for the needs of the working-class laid the basis for the fight against Jim Crow laws in the 1950's and 60's.

> *The Party inspired loyalty for reasons beyond simply an affinity for Marxist ideas. It was the campaigns communists ran against police brutality, the practice of lynching and the Jim Crow laws that made their politics relevant to the lives of ordinary people. In the North as well as the South, on soapboxes on the streets of Harlem as well as on plots of sharecropped land in Alabama, Communist organizing addressed the… concerns of black people.*
>
> *Communists believed that organizing the working-class would work only if white workers realized that their liberation, too, was bound up with the fate of Black workers….*
>
> *In short, American Communism was a movement that grew out of what the historian Robin D. G. Kelley, the author of "Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression," calls "the most despised and dispossessed elements of American society." "It was the Black workers drawn to the party, Professor Kelley ar-*

Continued on page 6

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CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

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